



CHILDREN'S  
SERVICES  
FUND  
OF JACKSON COUNTY

Board of Directors – Special Session  
Meeting Minutes  
Virtual Meeting  
Monday, May 5, 2023 – 1:00 p.m.

Board Members Present:

Jessica Ramirez (Chair)  
Amy Harris (Vice Chair) \*  
Ajia Morris (Treasurer)  
Judy Morgan (Secretary)  
Brian Kaberline  
Ann Mesle

Staff Present:

Rob Whitten (CEO)  
Sue Richter

\*Dir. Harris joined the meeting at 1:11 p.m.

- I. Call to Order Jessica Ramirez  
The Children's Services Fund of Jackson County (CSF) meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.
- II. Roll Call  
At the request of Dir. Ramirez, the roll was taken. There were no guests in attendance.
- III. Review/Approval of Proposed Agenda Jessica Ramirez  
There were no changes requested to the proposed agenda.
- IV. CSF Relocation Rob Whitten
  - A. Discussion Introduction  
The following points were made regarding the steps taken prior to recommendation:
    1. Consideration of the needs of the CSF was intentional and included balancing operational requirements with appropriate utilization of public dollars.
    2. Re-authorization will increase the current staff of five to between 12 and 15 team members, requiring additional space. Current staff requirements include individual, dedicated space with the option for privacy during phone calls and virtual meetings.
    3. Staff will spend more time in the office soon, likely 3-4 days per week.
    4. The creation of a Community Room provides a dedicated space as the CSF takes on more of a role around convening. Additionally, this dedicated space with adequate technology is a need for Board meetings.

B. CSF Space Requirements

1. Current vs. Desired Space

	Current	Desired
CEO	18' x 12'5"	18' x 13'
CFO/CPO	15'9" x 11' 7"	15' x 12'
Team (13)	11'8" x 8' 7"	15' x 10'
Conference Room	18' x 14'	18' x 14'
Community Room		50' x 35'
Storage/Kitchen/Community Room Support		

2. Current Opportunity

A broker was retained, based on recommendations received from partners to assist CSF in locating a new space. This broker only represents tenants in lease negotiations to prevent any conflicts of interest.

Thirteen properties ranging from \$21 - \$29 per square foot were presented to the CSF CEO for consideration. Five of those properties were eliminated due to insufficient parking, expense, or location. Of the remaining eight properties, four were toured based on their alignment with identified needs. Two of the four were eliminated due to parking or a full build-out being required.

Test fits for the two remaining locations were requested, with one property offering the least amount of build out required, reducing renovation costs for the Fund.

Dir. Mesle, Dir. Morgan and Dir. Harris agreed to serve on a Board workgroup, and requested responses to the following questions regarding the preferred location as follows:

- Q1 – Was the Troost corridor/Eastern Kansas City considered?  
 A1 – Yes, the boundaries for the search grid were from 670 to the north, Grandview to the south, State Line Road to the west and points between 71 to I-435 on the east. These boundaries would include both the Troost corridor and east Kansas City. Based on the staff space, community room, and parking requirements there was not a location that met those needs. Meeting our identified needs in that geography would require identifying a location and then making a commitment to undertake extensive renovations. This does not appear feasible in the time we have remaining on our current lease.
- Q2 – Is a five-year lease an option?

A2 – The property owner would likely consider that option, but this would reduce the “bargaining power” being used to leverage favorable terms for CSF.

- Q3 – Should the renovation cost exceed what the property owner allows, how and when would CSF pay for this?

A3 – The broker indicated it could be paid either as a one-time upfront payment or rolled into the terms of the lease to be spread over the life of the lease.

- Q4 – Does our broker only represent CSF?

A4 – The broker is only a tenant broker, and therefore only represents CSF in any negotiation.

### 3. Recommendation

Due to the operational needs of the CSF, which include the increase in staff offices, parking, community room, and the current lease at Penntower expiring in 8.5 months, Mr. Whitten recommended proceeding with the test fit location requiring the least number of renovations as the new location.

## V. Closed Session

It was determined that closed session would not be necessary at this time and a very general summary could be presented to safeguard any proprietary contract information. These details were included in the board materials for review, prior to the meeting. Mr. Whitten then reviewed total square footage, monthly and annual costs, noting the year-one base lease would be one-half of one percent of the anticipated operating budget for 2024. Mr. Whitten also shared information regarding the tenant improvement budget and allowance, rental abatement, parking costs, and parking allowances.

## VI. Board Questions and Comments

Dir. Mesle indicated that staff had been diligent in their search for a new location, based on what the Board said they wanted. She said that the remaining discussion is determining if this location is the best choice for partners, and the best use of taxpayer money. She questioned if the shorter lease is available, then in the next five to seven years would more options based on current expansion efforts along Troost and Prospect be available? She further stated that consideration of buying a building would be problematic.

Dir. Morgan asked about the cost of staff parking. Mr. Whitten responded that staff parking would be \$100 per month, per staff member. CSFs currently pays \$50 per month, per staff member for parking. This cost would increase incrementally as more staff would be on-boarded. Dir. Morgan questioned if the guest parking allowance being offered would be enough, to which Mr. Whitten responded that most months it would be more than enough, and the unused portion would rollover for future use. However, to be transparent, should a week’s worth of meetings occur, then this cost to CSF could increase. Dir. Morgan then asked if the community room space limited CSF in finding a location? The response was yes, that size was included in the overall

square footage required and only those locations of that total square footage were considered. In response to a question regarding cost along the south 435 corridor the response was that those locations were quoted at \$22 per square foot.

Dir. Harris asked if CSF was open to considering a separate space for the community room? Mr. Whitten responded that we did request this be a part of the space so that CSF could make investments in furniture and technology to control use of the space.

Dir. Kaberline expressed a preference that CSF be located near partners that are served by the Fund. He questioned how far some of those areas under development are from having that space available. In response Dir. Morris stated that her research indicated while there are many projects currently underway none will be ready next year and possibly not until 2025 or 2026. Her contacts shared that this is due to years of disinvestment and exclusion. Dir. Morris indicated that to consider these areas would be too costly and take too long to consider right now.

Dir. Kaberline shared that his preference would be to go for the best option and consider a five-year lease, and hope to reward the pioneers that are building on the east side now.

Dir. Harris shared her concern was from the financial perspective looking at a five-year lease versus a seven-year lease and do we get significant financial benefit. Dir. Kaberline and Dir. Morgan both agreed that a request to consider a five-year lease be requested to get a financial comparison of any realized savings between the two.

Dir. Ramirez asked if we did a seven-year lease what would the lease renewals and early termination be? Mr. Whitten explained that the RFP response stated there would not be any early termination options. The RFP response did include two options for renewal.

Dir. Kaberline asked if there was access to any shared conference space in that building. Mr. Whitten indicated that there was space, it does have audio visual, but lacks the technology for virtual meetings. Dir. Kaberline suggested that if there was access to a common conference space that would reduce the leased square footage by 20%, we explore this option. Dir. Ramirez indicated that it is important that the ability to attend virtually also be assured as the current technology is not working well.

Mr. Whitten summarized the following for consensus from attendees:

- There is an openness to this location with further questions and feedback needed.
- Details regarding the five-year lease offering should be considered.
- Reduction in availability of space and cost with the elimination of the community space.
- Research access and cost to other considerations using a public community space.
- Research technology required to support a public community space.

- VII. Adjournment  
The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted: Sue Richter*

  
Judy Morgan, Secretary

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Next Meeting: Thursday, May 18, 2023 - 2:30 p.m.